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TAGS: [ENRG](#) [PARM](#) [TRGY](#) [PREL](#) [JO](#)
SUBJECT: GOJ OFFICIALS CONFIRM TO ISN PDAS JORDAN,S
COMMITMENT TO NONPROLIFERATION MEASURES

REF: AMMAN 2770

Classified By: Acting Assistant Secretary for ISN Patricia
McNerney for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (S/NF) Summary: International Security and Nonproliferation PDAS Patricia McNerney, during her October 13-14 visit to Jordan, discussed Iran, the full range of nonproliferation issues, and bilateral cooperation with Government of Jordan (GOJ) officials including Foreign Minister Salah Al-Bashir, Minister of Industry and Trade Amer Hadidi, Minister of Energy and Natural Resources Khaldoun Qteishat, and Chairman of the Jordan Atomic Energy Commission Dr. Khaled Toukan. GOJ counterparts shared U.S. views on the threats posed by Iran, including its nuclear aspirations, and expressed concern about a lack of Arab consensus on dealing with the Persian Gulf neighbor. They confirmed their commitment to counterproliferation, agreed that a strategic trade and export control law could serve as a barrier to Iran and others illicitly obtaining material and equipment for their nuclear programs. They confirmed such a law had been drafted, but commented that parliamentary passage required careful coordination. The officials further encouraged expedited interagency review of the 123 Agreement, asserting Jordan would abide by all international nuclear agreements and only seek partners from responsible countries. Bashir welcomed the idea for a bilateral Counterproliferation Task Force (CTF) dialog and promised to comment on the U.S. proposal. The GOJ officials also reported the cabinet had approved the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) needed to launch the Megaports initiative and looked forward to a November signing ceremony. End Summary.

Jordan Committed to Countering Iranian Threat

12. (S/NF) Across meetings, McNerney and GOJ officials discussed the threats posed by Iran,s continued nuclear aspirations and the importance of compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR) and International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) engagement in light of a recent IAEA assessment that Iran could produce sufficient enriched uranium for a nuclear explosive by 2010. With oil prices dropping, McNerney reported Iran is more likely to attempt to circumvent UNSCRs and abuse the international financial community to meet its needs. Strong domestic export controls, border security, and cooperation through the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) and Global Initiative (GI) are essential. Foreign Minister

Bashir agreed that Iran is a shared threat, and particularly dangerous for the Gulf countries. He cited as challenges to maintaining pressure on Iran the lack of an Arab consensus (blaming Qatar and Oman), and a weak European position with regard to Iran,s nuclear energy program and gas pipelines. He voiced concern that an exclusive focus on Iran,s nuclear program undervalued other Iranian threats in the Middle East. He called for a peaceful solution to the Iranian problem and further said more pressure needed to be placed on Israel which he accused of contributing to the arms race. McNerney countered the greatest threat was not Israel, but rather the resulting proliferation of nuclear weapons if Iran were not thwarted.

Export Controls Key to Jordanian and Regional Security

13. (C) McNerney advised Minister of Industry and Trade Hadidi that a strong strategic trade control law could be an effective barrier to Iran obtaining material for its nuclear program. Such a law, she explained, is the basis of nonproliferation activities and with the U.S.-Jordan Free Trade Agreement set to come into full force in 2010, continuing discussions on the 123 Agreement, and Jordan poised to begin uranium mining, it is essential that the necessary controls be in place to safeguard the transfer of nuclear and dual-use material and equipment. She added that

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U.S. companies and investors looked for strong export controls and counseled that Jordan,s law should be broad and flexible and include strong criminal penalties for export control violations, robust control lists, and allow for the implementation of the letter and spirit of the UNSCRs. Hadidi responded that Jordan is very proactive with these issues and that an export control law had been drafted, but cautioned that parliament could be obstructionist so great care was needed both in when and how the law was presented. Nevertheless, he asserted the law would &soon8 be submitted to parliament and that the GOJ would share the draft with the U.S. He welcomed McNerney,s offer of expert advice and technical training for adopting and drafting regulations and training prosecutors and judges on handling export violation cases. McNerney also opined that Jordan needed a &border control team8 to better manage issues related to WMD proliferation and the import and transshipment of dual-use items.

Strengthening Bilateral Dialogs on Nuclear Issues

14. (S/NF) GOJ Officials expressed hope for "expedited progress" on the 123 Agreement currently under interagency review. Atomic Energy Commissioner Toukan explained Jordan was preparing to offer tenders for site selection for a future nuclear reactor and having the agreement in place was important to the process, especially in obtaining U.S. technology. McNerney said the U.S. was sympathetic to Jordan's energy needs, but that nonproliferation concerns required thoughtful consideration before the Agreement could be sent forward for presidential certification. She emphasized the need for movement on adopting an export control law to protect nuclear and dual use material, equipment and technology and written assurances that Jordan would only engage in cooperation with parties to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. She further urged caution in Jordan's development of uranium mining, citing Iranian interest in seeking new sources for yellow cake. Toukan asserted Jordan will abide by all international and multilateral agreements on nuclear energy; is interested in building strategic relationships with P-5 powers and has no desire to consider bilateral cooperation with countries that are not party to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty; and "will not jeopardize our long-term interests for short term gain."

15. (C) Toukan said part of Jordan,s nuclear energy approach included consulting widely) U.S., France, Canada, Korea, and others) so as not to be held hostage by one country. He explained the recently signed agreement with the French company Areva included long-range projects and the September MOU on uranium mining with China was in exchange for development projects (reftel). Toukan added that Jordan,s first two reactors would be for domestic needs, but that excess power could be sold to neighboring countries, including Israel. Toukan also explained that in Jordan,s uranium deal with Areva, it included the requirement that Areva guarantee supply of nuclear fuel (through an option to be exercised at Jordan,s discretion) to Jordan,s nuclear power program for as long as the uranium deal remains in effect. In a separate meeting, Energy Minister Qteishat said that a regional project might be necessary because the nuclear reactors they would be reviewing are large relative to Jordan,s needs.

16. (SBU) Commenting on the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP), Toukan welcomed engagement, but looked for more traction on uranium banks and waste management. He expressed concern that GNEP has yet to devise a mechanism for ensuring adequate fuel supplies for non-nuclear states at a fair price in a regulated and transparent manner.

Counterproliferation Initiatives -----

17. (C) Stressing the importance of international cooperation to nonproliferation efforts, McNerney praised Jordanian participation in PSI and GI. McNerney suggested that Jordan

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initiate a plan of work program in the Global Initiative and they agreed to try to work on this issue regionally with other interested countries, such as the UAE, Bahrain, and Saudi Arabia. She cited a successful bilateral CTF dialogue with the United Arab Emirates on counterproliferation and proposed to Bashir that the U.S. and Jordan establish a similar dialogue. She noted that a CTF would provide a more focused forum to discuss legal and policy elements of counterproliferation and passed a proposal to Bashir. Bashir responded the GOJ appreciated the existing bilateral dialogue and would review the proposal for more focused discussions, but inquired whether the establishment of a CTF was part of the 123 Agreement process. McNerney clarified that while it was not a requirement for the 123 Agreement, it would certainly demonstrate that Jordan takes its nonproliferation commitments seriously, which will be important when Congress considers the 123 Agreement.

Progress on Megaports -----

18. (C) NNSA Deputy Administrator for Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation Will Tobey informed all GOJ representatives of USG interest in concluding the agreement necessary to launch the Megaports initiative to enhance radiation monitoring and detection at Jordanian ports of entry. Hadidi reported the cabinet had approved the MOU and the GOJ welcomed both U.S. technical and financial assistance. NOTE.

In a separate discussion, Jordan Nuclear Regulatory Commissioner Dr. Jamal Sharaf confirmed to EconCouns that the cabinet had approved the MOU, although he had not yet received written notification. He said the GOJ hoped to sign the bilateral agreement in early November. End Note. Tobey also offered radiological response training which Hadidi generally welcomed, noting it was premature for Jordan to identify specific training needs.

Cooperative Monitoring Center -----

19. (SBU) On October 14, McNerney visited the Cooperative Monitoring Center (CMC), a joint venture between Sandia National Laboratories and the Jordanian Royal Scientific Society (RSS). The CMC staff briefed her on the variety of export control and border security related training that the CMC supports, including a successful recent United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 workshop. Additionally, they noted that the CMC hosts Iraqi scientific scholars participating in the Iraqi Scientist Engagement Program (ISEP). McNerney inquired whether the CMC could support additional Iraqi scientists. The CMC staff agreed to work to expand the numbers of scientists at the CMC and noted that physical space should not be an issue, as the scientists could use the broader facilities of the RSS. McNerney responded positively. CMC staff noted that getting Jordanian visas for visiting Iraqis is still an issue, although it is less of an issue that it had been. Tobey noted that the CMC had hosted a lot of USG export control and border security training programs.

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